



Mr. Robert M. Lucania received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor on 13 May 2013 during a ceremony held at Ellis Island. This Ellis Island Medal of Honor was founded by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO) and intended to pay homage to the immigrant experience. The medals are awarded to native-born and naturalized U.S. citizens from various ethnic backgrounds. The honorees are said to "exemplify outstanding qualities in both their personal and professional lives, while continuing to preserve the richness of their particular heritage.

All branches of the United States Armed Forces traditionally participate. Both the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate have officially recognized the Ellis Island Medals of Honor. Each year's recipients are read into the Congressional Record. The Great Hall where immigrants were once processed hosts the gala dinner which follows the ceremony. Approximately 100 Medalists are honored each year. Past Medalists include six Presidents, as well as Nobel Prize winners and leaders of industry, education, the arts, sports and government. The Ellis Island Medals of Honor celebrate the diversity of American life, honoring not only individuals, but the pluralism and democracy that have enabled ancestry groups to maintain their identities while becoming integral parts of the American Way of life.